

sanguinea and those of the conifers among whose roots it always grows. We had recently lifted some of the plants and put them in a garden on the way up to Yosemite, where we stayed the night; in the hope of learning whether they would live, when moved with the whole of the fleshy root mass from which the plants shoot, which appeared to me to be perennial. I have lately turned up a paper on this very curious and beautiful plant written by Professor Oliver in the *Annals of Botany*, vol. 4, no. 15, August, 1890, p. 300 et seq., from material which Godman and I collected near San Bernardino in 1888. Since then I know of no account giving further details of the life history of the plant which I am very anxious to know more about. Can you let me know whether it has been studied in nature by any American botanist and whether anything is published on the subject? Also whether the plant has ever been successfully kept alive in a garden or raised from seed?

I could not either in the San Bernardino Mountains or in Yosemite find any plants which looked like seedlings, and yet the sporadic way in which the plant grows made me think that would be its normal way of reproduction.—Jan. 3, 1922, Colesborne, Gloucester, England.

Mr. Elwes is an English farmer who has always been a great traveler and student of natural history. His acute and interesting observations were often made use of by Darwin, Wallace and other naturalists. He is the author, with A. Henry, of a great illustrated work on the Trees of Great Britain.

Since the above letter was written Mr. Elwes has died in England, but it seems desirable to publish his query and so stimulate further field observations or experiments on one of our most interesting Sierran species of flowering plants.—W. L. JEPSON.

## OPEN LETTERS

### *Umbellularia Californica* in Lake County

Last week I stopped two nights at Laurel Camp on the north side of Clear Lake near Bartlett Landing. The California Laurels (*Umbellularia Californica*) there are very interesting. They have the habit of reproducing a group surrounding an old decayed stump in much the manner of *Sequoia sempervirens*. The tree we camped under gave at noon a shadow spread of 94 feet. Its trunk diameter could not be taken because of irregular shape, but a very perfectly shaped tree close by had a trunk circumference of 18 feet, 1 inch at about 4 feet above the ground, being its least diameter, for it branched just above that point, thus giving a calculated diameter of 5.72 feet. This tree stands uncrowded, it is in perfect health and is a remarkably fine specimen.—F. C. YEOMANS, Aug. 2, 1923.